UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : Mr. Gallagher

FROM : B. H. Cooke

SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT
JOHN F. KENNEDY
NOVEMBER 22, 1963
DALLAS, TEXAS

DATE: 10/18/75

1 - Mr. Callahan
1 - Mr. Adams
1 - Mr. Gallagher
1 - Mr. O'Connell
1 - Mr. Cooke
1 - Mr. Gow

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Reference is made to UPI wire service release dated 10/16/75 (copy attached), crediting U. S. Representative Don Edwards with statements raising issue with the FBI's working relationship with the Warren Commission during the investigation of captioned case.

The wire service release specifically quotes U. S. Representative Don Edwards, Chairman of the House Civil and Constitutional Rights Subcommittee as stating that the FBI was not "candid with the Warren Commission and that it didn't provide the Warren Commission with all the information in its files"; that Edwards' panel is trying to determine if there was "an appropriate working relationship" between the FBI and the Warren Commission; and thirdly, that the Commission did not have its own investigators and had to rely on the FBI.

The above allegation that the FBI was not candid with the Commission and did not provide all the information in its files to the Commission is false and without foundation. The Commission's records themselves reflect that our five-volume report submitted 12/9/63, which summarized the results of our investigation conducted immediately after the assassination, was of principle importance to the Commission. Based upon an analysis of this report, the Commission requested the FBI furnish "the underlying investigative materials relied upon in the summary report." Reports dealing with this request were subsequently furnished the Commission which in turn organized the facts developed into pertinent categories in order to reveal unresolved and unanswered questions from which additional investigation was requested. It should be noted that these additional requests for investigation were handled not only by the FBI but by other Governmental agencies and Congressional Committees. The Commission record also points out that independent experts outside the Federal Government were used to supplement and verify the information provided the Commission.

2 - ENCLOSURE
Enclosure

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In light of the above information it appears highly unlikely that any pertinent information could have been withheld from the Commission as it would have come to light during the course of the Commission's inquiry. The Commission relied not only on the above investigative results but based its findings primarily upon the testimony of sworn witnesses.

In regard to whether or not there was an appropriate working relationship between the FBI and the Commission, there is no information to indicate that there was anything but an excellent working relationship between the Bureau and the Commission. The actions of the Bureau as well as those of all other investigative agencies connected with this inquiry were subjected to the scrutiny of the Commission. The Commission record clearly states whenever the facts or rumors called for an appraisal of the acts of the agencies themselves, special measures were taken and the actions of that agency were reviewed in detail by the Commission's staff. In some instances, the inquiry conducted by the Commission's staff included the appearance and testimony under oath of the responsible official of the agency under scrutiny.

The statement that the Warren Commission was not provided all the information in the FBI files is in apparent reference to our recent acknowledgment concerning the note left at the Dallas Office of the FBI by Lee Harvey Oswald prior to the assassination. This matter has been the subject of an extensive internal FBI inquiry handled separately. There is no indication that any information believed to be pertinent to the investigation was withheld from the Commission. — Key Exhibit for info. Concerning note and call, Dallas

The point raised in the above news release that the Commission did not have its own investigators and had to rely upon the FBI is a misleading statement. The Commission did not have its own investigators as is evidenced by the Commission's report which reflects that "Because of the intelligence, cooperation and facilities of Federal investigative agencies, it was unnecessary for the Commission to employ investigators other than the members of the Commission's legal staff." The Commission did not have to rely solely upon the FBI in the conduct of this investigation as the Commission record indicates that 10 major Departments of the Federal Government, 14 independent agencies, 4 Congressional Committees, plus independent experts were utilized in the conduct of this investigation. The independent experts were used on occasion to verify and supplement investigation conducted by the above sources.

The above information is clearly contained in the Foreword to the "Report of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy."

ACTION:

For information.